

STIMULUS WATCH: WEEK 56

Half a Million Dollars to Replace Windows in a Vacant Visitor Center

- The U.S. Forest Service is spending \$554,000 in Stimulus funds to pay for new windows at the Coldwater Ridge Visitor Center at Mount St. Helens in Washington State. Opened in 1993, the visitor center was closed in 2007 and the Forest Service has plans to reopen it in the near future.
- Mark Rey, formerly with the USDA, noted when the visitor center closed that there was more space at the monument “than the public can reasonably use.”
- Yet, a government official close to the Stimulus project defended the use of taxpayer-funded renovations on the visitor center, arguing that replacing the windows was akin to “keeping a vacant house in good repair.”
- As Washington state residents suffer from an 8.9% unemployment rate, Stimulus funds meant to create jobs should not be used to fix up a vacant building which was built only 17 years ago and may or may not be used again in the future.
- Under the House Republican Stimulus Alternative, \$554,000 million in taxpayer funds would not be spent on a vacant visitor center. Instead, Republicans would have created twice as many jobs at half the cost. To learn how visit:
<http://republicanwhip.house.gov/Jobs/>
- Sources:
<http://therightofthepeople.wordpress.com/2010/08/04/stimulus-wasted-forest-service-to-replace-windows-in-visitor-center-closed-in-2007-amboy-wa-554763/>
<http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/blogs/Examiner-Opinion-Zone/Stimulus-bill-has-federal-government-stimulated-waste-103874464.html>

The Washington Watch Report is available on the House Republican Whip's website:
<http://republicanwhip.house.gov/blog/wwindex.html>

It is updated weekly with new items of wasteful stimulus spending, a look at jobs created by the stimulus.